

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 06596 01 OF 02 152028Z

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

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NEA-10 TRSE-00 SAI-01 EB-11 OMB-01 DRC-01 ACDA-19

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7582

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS; PFOR, FR

SUBJECT: SECRETARY'S CLARIFICATIONS ON EUROPE -- PRESS AND
OTHER COMMENT.

SUMMARY: SECSTATE'S CLARIFICATION OF REMARKS ON EUROPE WAS
GREETED WITH APPROVAL IN SOME PRESS QUARTERS, PARTICULARLY
AMONG WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENTS OF PARIS NEWSPAPERS. "THIS
IS NOT AN ORDINARY SIGHT", REPORTED ONE; "MR. KISSINGER SUCCEEDED
VERY WELL", ANOTHER USED OCCASION TO OFFER READERS THE U.S. VIEW
OF TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS AND OF RECENT CONTROVERSY. APPROVAL WAS
ALSO VOICED PERSONALLY TO EMBOFF BY RANKING MEMBER OF JOBERT'S
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PAGE 02 PARIS 06596 01 OF 02 152028Z

POLICY PLANNING TEAM AND BY INFLUENTIAL AND WELL-CONNECTED FRENCH

JOURNALIST. END SUMMARY.

1. " FOREIGN MINISTER EXCUSING HIMSELF HUMBLLY, NOT BY A STATE-MENT WRITTEN IN DIPLOMATIC TERMS, BUT LIVE, IN PERSON, BEFORE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS, ALL BECAUSE HE WAS CARRIED AWAY BY HIS FEELINGS AND LET HIMSELF SAY DAMAGING THINGS ABOUT COUNTRIES ALLIED TO HIS OWN -- CERTAINLY, THIS IS NOT AN ORDINARY SIGHT", EXCLAIMED FIGARO CORRESPONDENT JACQUET-FRANCILLON IN DISPATCH FROM WASHINGTON. "BUT MR. HENRY KISSINGER IS NOT A MINISTER LIKE THE OTHERS, AND HAS PROVED IT MANY TIMES. HE HAS NOT FINISHED ASTONISHING US, AND HE SUCCEEDED VERY WELL THIS MORNING (AT THE NOON BRIEFING). EVERYONE THOUGHT HE WAS ABOUT TO PULL A RABBIT OUT OF HIS HAT, ANNOUNCE THE LIFTING OF THE OIL EMBARGO. WRONG. MR. KISSINGER WAS THERE BEFORE US SIMPLY TO APPOLOGIZE, TO ADMIT THAT (IN RECENT STATEMENT) HE HAD CERTAINLY NOT MADE ANY BIG CONTRIBUTION TO THE TRANSATLANTIC DIALOGUE".

2. JACQUET-FRANCILLON JUDGED THAT WHILE "NO ONE VERY WELL UNDERSTOOD" JUST WHAT SECRETARY MEANT IN THURSDAY'S EXPLANATION BY TERM "COMPLETE LEGITIMACY" (SIC) OF EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS, "WHAT IS INDEED VERY CLEAR IS THAT MR. KISSINGER WAS COMPLETELY CONSCIOUS OF HAVING MADE A BIG GAFFE...IF ONE JUDGES BY THE UNANIMOUSLY INDIGNANT COMMENTS FROM THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY IN WASHINGTON ABOUT HIS (EARLIER) REMARKS, MR. KISSINGER WELL DESERVES OUR GRATITUDE. ONE OR TWO MORE MISTAKES OF THAT KIND AND THEY WILL HAVE TO RAISE A STATUE OF HIM IN THE CENTRAL SQUARE OF EVERY EUROPEAN VILLAGE."

3. IN CONVERSATION WITH POLITICAL COUNSELOR, THIERRY DE MONTBRIAL, OF QUAI'S CENTRE D'ANALYSES ET PRECISIONS, AND GEORGES SUFFERT, EDITOR OF WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE LE POINT, EXPRESSED PLEASED ASTONISHMENT AT SECRETARY'S CLARIFICATIONS AND MANNER IN WHICH THEY WERE PROVIDED, AND VIEWED HIS PERFORMANCE AS EXTRAORDINARY ACT OF HONESTY AND COURAGE THAT WOULD MAKE VERY GOOD IMPRESSION IN FRANCE.

4. "KISSINGER MAKES AMENDS ON EUROPE," HEADLINED FRANCE SOIR, WHICH REPORTED IN FULL SECRETARY'S EXPLANATIONS OF HIS 'LEGITIMACY' COMMENT ABOUT EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS AND INCLUDED BOTH REMARKS THAT BROUGHT LAUGHTER FROM JOURNALISTS (STATE 051941). PAPER'S LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 PARIS 06596 01 OF 02 152028Z

WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT, DE SEGONZAC, THEN PRESENTED U.S. CONCEPTIONS IN DISCUSSING TRANSATLANTIC "DIVERGENCES" (SIC) TO WHICH SECRETARY HAD REFERENCE. WHY THE APRIL SPEECH ON REVISING ATLANTIC RELATIONS? BECAUSE U.S. FELT MOMENT HAD COME TO TIGHTEN LINKS WITH EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AND TO ESTABLISH BASIS FOR LONG-TERM POLICY. DOES U.S. SEEK TO IMPOSE HEGEMONY ON EUROPE? NO* BECAUSE IT IS RICH, POWERFUL, MORE DEVELOPED, U.S. FEELS IT DOES HAVE EXCEPTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES, BUT IT SEEKS NO DOMINATION

OF EUROPEAN PARTNERS. IS WASHINGTON OPPOSED TO CREATION OF A EUROPEAN IDENTITY? OF COURSE NOT--A STRONG EUROPE CAN ONLY SERVE INTERESTS OF WESTERN WORLD; AT SAME TIME, U.S. DOES NOT WANT SUCH IDENTITY TO BE DECLARED AGAINST U.S. OR TO ITS DETRIMENT. HOW IT EXPLAIN THE GROWING KISSINGER IRRITATION AGAINST EUROPEANS? BY THE ABSENCE, IN HIS VIEW, OF CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN EEC AND WASHINGTON. AMERICANS MAKE A PRINCIPLE OF REGULAR CONTACTS, AS CLOSE AS POSSIBLE. DOES U.S. WANT A VETO OVER DECISIONS OF EEC? NO -- BUT AMERICANS WOULD LIKE TO BE ABLE TO MAKE KNOWN TO EUROPEANS WHEN THEY FEEL THEIR INTERESTS ARE AT STAKE; U.S. IS NOT ASKING THAT ITS POSITIONS BE ALWAYS ACCEPTED, BUT DOES NOT WANT THEM TO BE SYSTEMATICALLY REJECTED, EITHER. WHY DOES U.S. MOSTLY BLAME FRANCE? WASHINGTON FEELS THAT FRENCH ACTIONS HAVE NOT BEEN CONSTRUCTIVE, BUT U.S. DOES NOT INTEND ATTACK FRANCE HEAD ON AND FORCE ITS PARTNERS TO CHOOSE BETWEEN PARIS AND WASHINGTON. SECRETARY OF STATE HOPES EUROPEANS WILL BE ABLE TO STAND UP TO FRANCE, BUT FEELS THEY HAVE NOT HAD COURAGE TO DO SO YET.

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PAGE 01 PARIS 06596 02 OF 02 152039Z

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 PARIS 6596

5. NONETHELESS, ASKED DE SEGONZAC, "ISN'T MR. KISSINGER TAKING THE CHANCE OF LEADING EUROPE TO POINT OF RUPTURE WITH U.S.? THINGS ARE NOT YET AT THAT STAGE. BUT MR. KISSINGER WAS SURPRISED BY EUROPEAN REACTIONS TO SOME OF THIS STATEMENTS THESE LAST DAYS. THAT'S WHY, FOR TWO DAYS RUNNING, AMERICANS FELT IT WAS A GOOD IDEA TO REASSERT THAT UNITY OF THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE IS THE CORNERSTONE OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY".

6. CORRESPONDENT HENRI PIERRE OF LE MONDE WROTE FROM WASHINGTON THAT "IT IS RARE TO HEAR A MINISTER, ESPECIALLY A FOREIGN MINISTER, PUBLICLY ADMIT HIS MISTAKES. PLAYFUL AND SERIOUS AT THE SAME TIME, PLAYING ON ALL THE REGISTERS, MR. KISSINGER ACQUITTED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 PARIS 06596 02 OF 02 152039Z

HIMSELF WITH A HUMILITY THAT COULD SERVE AS AN EXAMPLE TO HIS EUROPEAN COLLEAGUES".

7. LE MONDE PUBLISHED FULL TEXT OF SECRETARY'S REMARKS, RECEIVED ON WIRELESS FILE AND DELIVERED TO LE MONDE EARLY FRIDAY MORNING BY USIS.

8. RAYMOND ARON IN LE FIGARO: "THE CENTRAL STAKES IN THE QUARREL ARE AFTER ALL MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE MOODS OR THE FENCING OF JOBERT AND KISSINGER. FOLLOWING THE U.S. WITHDRAWAL FROM VIETNAM AND RAPPROCHEMENT WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND CHINA, THE AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE SINCERELY WANTED TO INFUSE SOME LIFE INTO THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE, BUT HE FAILED. HE BLAMED THAT FAILURE ON FRENCH OBSTRUCTIONS AND CHOSE TO IGNORE HIS OWN BLUNDERS AND THE ROLE OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

9. "THE YOM KIPPUR WAR FORCED HIM TO TRAVEL THE WORLD AND TO ONCE AGAIN USE HIS NEGOTIATING TALENTS IN SECRET. IT ALSO POISONED RELATIONS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND FRANCE, REINFORCED THE U.S. STANCE, WEAKENED THE EUROPEAN POSITION AND, NOT EVEN COUNTING THE CLASH BETWEEN TWO PERSONALITIES, IT EXAGGERATED THE DEBATE: THE U.S. MAKES DECISIONS WITHOUT CONSULTING ITS ALLIES* WHY SHOULDN'T THE EUROPEANS DO THE SAME?

10. "I PERSONALLY DOUBT THAT CURRENT EUROPEAN STRATEGY IS THE BEST POSSIBLE...IN ANY CASE, THAT STRATEGY IS PARALYZING NORMAL DIPLOMACY...THE GIVE-AND-TAKE AND THE MAKING OF CONCESSIONS, THE ESSENCE OF NEGOTIATING, ARE BECOMING IMPOSSIBLE...AS FOR MR. KISSINGER, WHO COULD NOT BE CALLED REPRESENTATIVE OF THE U.S., HIS ACTIONS DISAVOW THE IDEAS HE EXPRESSED SEVERAL YEARS AGO IN A BOOK WHICH I QUOTED FROM RECENTLY...

11. "IN THE SHORT RUN, WHERE THE ISRAELIS ARE CONCERNED, THE EUROPEANS PERHAPS THINK IT BETTER TO KEEP THEIR DISTANCE FROM THE U.S. BUT IN THE LONGER RUN, THE AMERICANS ARE HOLDING A BETTER HAND, AND WHETHER THE EUROPEANS WANT TO OR NOT, THEY CANNOT SOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF ENERGY PRICE INCREASES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS UNLESS THEY COOPERATE WITH THE UNITED STATES.

12. "I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER THE EUROPEANS AND AMERICANS ARE PARTNERS OR NOT, BUT I DO KNOW THAT THEY BELONG TO THE SAME WORLD MAR-

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PAGE 03 PARIS 06596 02 OF 02 152039Z

KET AND THAT THEY WOULD BE WELL-ADVISED TO STUDY TOGETHER THE SEVEN POINTS ENUMERATED BY HENRY KISSINGER AT HIS INAUGURAL SPEECH FOR THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE."

13. ARON GOES ON TO SPEAK OF THE KISSINGER/JOBERT DIFFERENCES AND WARNS THAT "THE TWO FOREIGN MINISTERS HAVE MANAGED TO ERECT AN ALMOST INSURMOUNTABLE OBSTACLE BETWEEN THEM: THE SINGLE VOICE OF A NON-EXISTENT EUROPE.

14. "IS THAT MAINLY THE FAULT OF HENRY KISSINGER'S LACK OF COURTESY OR OF MR. JOBERT' SUSPICIONS OVER ANY U.S. INITIATIVE? I DO NOT KNOW ENOUGH DETAILS ON WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO JUDGE. IN SPITE OF EVERYTHING, I REMAIN CONVINCED THAT HENRY KISSINGER CAN BE PUT TO GOOD USE, JUST AS AN ILLNESS OR MOVIE STARS CAN BE PUT TO GOOD USE...

15. COMBAT ANALYZED SECRETARY'S RECENT STATEMENTS AS FOLLOWS: "PERHAPS A LITTLE GIDDY FROM HIS LATEST DIPLOMATIC SUCCESSES IN THE MIDDLE EAST, THE SECSTATE TURNED U.S. ANNOYANCE AT A EUROPE SEEKING TO PLACE ITS ENERGY INTERESTS BEFORE ATLANTIC SOLIDARITY INTO CURRING WORDS. BUT DIPLOMACY, THAT FEROCIOUS ROW BETWEEN GENTLEMEN, HAS LITTLE TOLERANCE FOR SLIPS OF THE TONGUE. MR. KISSINGER PUBLICLY APOLOGIZED FOR WHAT HE SAID ABOUT THE EUROPEAN NATIONS. AND ONE MUST ADMIT MR. KISSINGER HAS A POINT IN HIS FAVOR: HE CHANGES HIS GUARD VERY QUICKLY WHEN THE BATTLE WARRANTS IT." COMBAT ALSO CALLED ATTENTION TO HARTMAN-SONNENFELD VISIT TO LONDON "TO SOUND OUT THE INTENTIONS OF THE NEW LABOR GOVERNMENT". IN THIS "NEW DIPLOMATIC OFFENSIVE", SAID THE PAPER, "MR. KISSINGER IS SENDING COUNSELORS IN WHOM HIS CONFIDENCE IS TOTAL, TO

HARASS THE WEEKEST POSITIONS OF THE ADVERSARY."

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